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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

INTERNAL DISTRIBUTION ONLY

11 October 1955

STAFF MEMORANDUM NO. 73-55

SUBJECT: O/NE Relationship with OCB

1. The increasing responsibilities and work load of OCB raises the question of O/NE's relationship with OCB, and particularly of whether IAC estimates are accurately reflected in OCB papers.

2. The DCI is a member of OCB. O/NE shares in the responsibility for assisting the DCI in seeing to it that OCB papers are in accord with IAC papers on the same subject.

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3. The great majority of OCB-approved papers are prepared by OCB working groups and are reviewed by the OCB Board Assistants before being submitted to the OCB. CIA has a representative on almost all the groups; he is almost invariably a DD/P man. Mr. [] is CIA's representative on the OCB Board Assistants. He is responsible for briefing the DCI prior to OCB meetings, just as Mr. Amory is for NSC meetings and Mr. Kent is for IAC meetings.

4. Most OCB papers fall into the following categories:

a. Status Reports. Weekly summaries of events -- both foreign and domestic -- which affect the implementation of NSC policies for which OCB has follow-up responsibility. They are prepared by the OCB staff and are not officially approved by the OCB. They are for information, not action. They contain some operational material not readily available to O/NE from other sources. They contain few OCB intelligence judgements. They are currently sent in one copy to Mr. Amory's office, routed to Mr. Amory and [] and filed in the Executive Registry. O/NE and O/CI currently get one copy each directly from Mr. [] office.

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DOCUMENT NO. 26

NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☒

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b. Progress Reports. These are usually prepared semi-annually. They are summary progress reports on specific NSC policies, are prepared by the OCB working groups, reviewed by the Board Assistants, approved by the OCB, and submitted for noting and approval by the NSC. They contain considerable policy information not readily or otherwise available to O/NE. The summary reports often contain intelligence judgements or estimates which serve as a basis for appreciations of the effectiveness of US policy or for recommendations for revisions of US policy. Mr. [] requests DD/I comments on intelligence aspects of drafts at two stages: (a) the penultimate working group draft, and (b) drafts submitted to the OCB Board Assistants. Mr. Amory's office determines which DD/I components should comment.

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c. Outline Plan of Operations. These are prepared after an NSC policy is approved by the President and are a listing of the courses of action, agency responsibilities and timing considerations for the implementation of an NSC policy. They are written guides to concerted action by all the overt agencies and levels concerned. They contain much operational information found in no other document. They contain some intelligence judgements and the determination of the recommended courses of action are obviously based on intelligence judgements even though they are not included in the final report. They receive the same routing in the DD/I area as Progress Reports and DD/I comments are similarly requested by Mr. [] 25X1

d. Detailed Development of Major Actions Relating to NSC Policies. These are detailed statements of actions by the overt operating agencies relating to the implementation of NSC policies. They are compiled from the submissions of the agencies and are used as a basis for preparing the semi-annual progress reports. They are not reviewed or acted on by the Board Assistants or the OCB. They contain a wealth of operational detail, much of it in a self-congratulatory tone. The level of detail far exceeds O/NE's needs.

e. Minutes of OCB Meetings. The official minutes of OCB meetings are routed to the DD/I and are not now passed on to O/NE. O/NE does receive a copy of (a) Mr. [] briefing memo to the DCI prior to OCB meetings; and (b) Mr. [] account of what transpired at the OCB meetings which is far fuller than the official published version.

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f. Memoranda for the OCB. In this category are lumped all OCB papers which do not fall into the five previous categories. They include special papers prepared by the working groups or the agencies to meet some pressing need for information or action to be provided by the OCB or recommended to the NSC. These papers vary so in importance that no generalizations regarding O/NE's need for them is possible. They are currently received in one copy in Mr. Amory's office.

5. O/NE Objectives vis-a-vis OCB.

O/NE's objectives vis-a-vis OCB can be categorized as follows:

a. Information. O/NE should have access to those OCB papers which contain operational information not readily or otherwise available. O/NE needs this information not only because it is an important part of the information needed to prepare estimates but because it helps O/NE tailor its estimates to the needs of those who are going to use them.

b. Comments. O/NE will be obliged to comment on all OCB papers which are inconsistent with published or immediately forthcoming NIE's. Where such inconsistencies are justified by intelligence since the date of the estimate, this must also be discussed. O/NE should also, at its option and discretion, make estimative comments on OCB papers on areas or subjects not covered by existing estimates. In the first instances, O/NE will in effect be acting for the DCI in his role as chairman of the IAC; in the second instance, O/NE will be acting solely for the DCI and not for the IAC.

c. Estimative Support. O/NE will seldom provide estimative support (through the IAC machinery) solely for OCB account, although the timing of certain estimates may be affected by OCB's work schedule.

d. Limitations. The volume of work handled and produced under OCB auspices makes it necessary for O/NE (and the IAC) to take precautions against being overburdened by assignments for OCB. Much of the OCB work is on a departmental rather than a national level. Much of it is also operations rather than intelligence. O/NE must concern itself only with that part of OCB's work which deals with truly national policy and requires the support of truly national intelligence estimates.

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6. RECOMMENDATIONS.

With the above objectives in mind, the following procedural recommendations are made:

a. Distribution.

1) All OCB documents, except Status Reports and Detailed Development papers, should be sent initially to the DD/I's office for screening and further routing. O/NE should continue to receive Status Reports direct from OCB

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2) O/NE should automatically receive from the DD/I one copy of Progress Reports (4b), Outline Plan of Operations (4c), Mr. [] transcripts of OCB meetings (4e), and should also receive those memoranda (4f) which the DD/I's office considers of sufficient importance to warrant routing to O/NE.

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3) Within O/NE the above documents should be routed first to the Office of the Chief of the Estimates Staff, which will determine subsequent routing. As a general rule, Status Reports and Mr. [] transcripts will go to the Reading Room. All others will go to the appropriate regional staff for further routing to the Reading Room if of sufficient interest and importance for the Board.

b. O/NE Comments. 25X1

1) Mr. [] and the DD/I should continue to have the responsibility for determining which OCB papers O/NE should comment on.

2) O/NE comments will normally be made on Progress Reports (4b), Outline Plan of Operations (4c), and on occasional special memoranda.

3) O/NE comments should wherever possible be made before the papers are approved by the OCB Board Assistants.

4) O/NE should receive its own copy of OCB drafts requiring comment and should be required to coordinate the DD/I comment only in special cases.

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5) OCB and Mr. [] and DD/P should be impressed with the desirability of giving O/NE as long as possible to prepare its comments.

6) All O/NE comments on OCB papers should be reviewed by the Chief of the Estimates Staff and he should assume responsibility for determining whether they should be reviewed by the Board. Few will require Board review.

7) O/NE staff comments should be addressed to the DD/I and go forward over his signature; Board comments should go direct to OCB, with one copy to the DD/I.

c. NIE's for OCB Account.

O/NE should not interpret OCB working level requests for an NIE as mandatory. As a general rule, OCB papers are of a type which rely far more heavily on current and departmental intelligence than on national estimates. NIE's in their scope and level of treatment are more appropriate as a basis for the formulation of policy by the NSC than for its implementation by the OCB. NIE's will normally be most useful to OCB at those times when the two processes of formulation and implementation begin to merge, i.e., when an OCB Progress Report is in fact a recommendation to the NSC for a revision of NSC policy.

d. IAC Relationship.

When commenting on OCB papers, O/NE is acting for the DCI in his capacity as Chairman of the IAC only when OCB papers deal with matters covered by existing valid or immediately forthcoming NIE's. In all other cases, O/NE's views will be its own, not the IAC's. Each IAC agency is represented on the OCB and can far more easily inject its views into OCB papers through its representative rather than collectively through the IAC machinery.

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